FARM AND FIRESIDE.

To Make Poultry Pay.

HENRY HALES.

WINTER TREATMENT.

For hens to lay in winter, it is necessary that they should be supplied with all the requirements of food, egg-shell matter, cleanliness and care, to keep them in a high state of health and condition. Good feeding is all that is required by nature for egg producing. This substance is better supplied by giving them sound, sweet food liberally, than by any artificial condiment or preparation sold for the purpose. The high price of such preparations, however good they may be, puts them beyond reach of the farmer to get a profitable return for the outlay. A trifle invested in a few simple things, such as pepper, pulverized charcoal, sulphur, and cayenne, answers all the purposes of keeping the birds in health. Even these should be used sparingly once or twice a week. When a fowl is found to be ailing, it must be separated from the others and treated with proper medicines for the disease. Such are now pretty well understood by practical breeders and poultry keepers.

Some years ago, hardly anything could be done for a sick fowl; but care and patience have found antidotes even for the most stubborn diseases, which, if taken before the bird sinks too low, will generally effect a cure. A farmer, however, cannot afford to spend much time on a hen, though valuable fowls are worth the trouble. Yet, when he finds any appearance of disease in his flock, he must make an effort to stop it at once, and not, as many will insist upon, leave them to their fate. In most cases, the spread of disease is easily prevented, if taken in time. After removing the diseased ones, a little sulphur and cayenne mixed in their soft food, a teaspoonful of sulphur and half as much of cayenne to four quarts of food given for two or three days, will generally arrest an ordinary trouble. The sulphur should be stopped, but the cayenne may be continued to be given as the birds recover. Indeed, it may be given to advantage once or twice a week all through the winter. Iron is a great tonic for ailing fowls, when first noticed to be out of condition. It is generally used in a simple preparation known as "Douglas' Mixture." It is sulphate of iron, common copperas eight ounces, and sulphuric acid one-half fluid ounce. These, put in a bottle with a gallon of soft or rain-water, are ready for use as soon as the iron dissolved. All keepers of poultry should have this and other medicines on hand before any sickness is discovered, so that no delay occurs when promptness is required. Of special diseases I shall treat hereafter. I have in former articles spoken of disinfecting the house and the necessity for the dust-bath, and of a supply of bone and oyster-shell.

The food should consist more of other grains than of corn. Although all kinds of poultry seem to prefer corn to other grain, yet corn has been proved by a great many poultry-men to be inferior as an egg producer to wheat, barley, &c., and occasionally to buckwheat and oats. Corn may be given sparingly with advantage, but corn alone makes hens too fat and lazy. So fed they lack animation and vigor, especially the Asiatic breeds, which are more prone than other strains to this fatness that seems to border on disease. Their intestines become encased in one mass of fat, and to stint fowls to any given quantity of food especially when confined, is quite impracticable. Soft food given once a day in winter, is very beneficial, particularly during spells of severe weather. It promotes laying. It should consist of ground grain, as corn, buckwheat, barley, wheat or oatmeal, varied at times, with some vegetable and animal food. I make up mine by boiling a lot of potatoes or turnips, pouring the hot water (in which they were boiled) upon some meal in another vessel with ground beef scraps added twice a week and a little cayenne. Make this into a stiff paste. Mash the vegetables and add meal enough to make this also into a stiff mass. Mix them together and feed when just warm. Most breeders recommend this to be done for their morning meal, but this will often keep the stock waiting hungry too long. Have light grain for them always, early every morning, and feed with the soft food by noon if not sooner, and all the grain they will eat for evening meal.

If these directions, with former ones in the Rural, do not make poultry pay, the fault lies in some other cause.

Pills.

Never use a fine comb.

Apply lemon juice to corns.

Hellebore will kill roaches.

Never eat too much—never go hungry.

Carpets having small figures are fashionable.

Kitchen floors, when oiled, will not show grease.

May-weed blossoms put into alcohol make a superior liniment.

The sick-room should be the lightest and brightest in the house.

Pure orris-root powder is a harmless and agreeable tooth-powder.

Raisins are rendered quite digestible if boiled or steamed before using them in cakes or pies.

A delicious sirup is made by melting one pound of maple sugar with two pounds of white sugar.

To sweeten the breath, pour a few drops of tincture of myrrh into a wine-glass of water and gargle the mouth thoroughly with it.

POUND CAKE.—Eight eggs beaten separately; not quite one pound of butter one pound of powdered sugar; not quite one pound of prepared flour, or flour with two heaping teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Beat the yelks, sugar and butter together, then add the beaten whites and flour by degrees, alternating until both are stirred in; flavor with lemon.

Tillage.

'What is the first essential in good agriculture?' 'Good plowing.' 'What is the second?' 'Plowing.' 'And the the third?' 'Manuring.' Such were the questions propounded and answered two thousand years ago by Cato, among whose many claims to the esteem of his fellow citizens not the least was his proficiency in farming. The advice was good then with regard to the rich lands about Rome, and practical experience during the intervening centuries as well as scientific research during the last, both go to prove the paramount nature of the advantages derivable from the thorough tillage of the soil implied by the ancient philosophers reiterated counsel.

All soils contain immemorially more or less manurial ingredients whose quantity and quality are dependent on their geological formation—on the varying proportions of disintegrated rocks of which they are mainly composed Moreover, in many of them, there is an admixture of animal and vegetable remains still rich in fertilizing properties. In both cases, however, these properties are imprisoned in an insoluble form and the action of water and air greatly facilitated and promoted by liberal tillage, is one of the most efficacious means of setting these manurial treasures at liberty and so fitting them for plant-food. The abundant character of this natural supply of nutriment has of late been strongly exemplified by means of an accurate experiment made by Mr. Lawes at Rothamsted, England. For thirty-four successive years he has grown a crop of wheat on the same piece of land, without the application of any artificial manure, and although the crops have had to gather all their inorganic elements, year after year, from the store of plant-food which nature had accumulated in the soil, yet in the yield there has been no decrease which could be clearly attributed to any exhaustion of the supply. Thorough tillage, however, had extirpated all weeds—those greedy gluttons of stolen food—and thrown the way open to the liberating chemical action of moisture as well as of the carbonic acid, oxygen and nitrogen of the atmosphere upon the imprisoned fertility of the soil.

By good tillage, subsequent rains more readily pass through the loosened tilth and penetrate the underlying soil where they remain in reserve against the time of drought. The air penetrates the ground as far as the stagnant water has been drawn off, and the finer the pulverization of the soil, the freer the atmospheric circulation, and the greater the amount of surface exposed to its beneficial chemical action. Moreover, when the earth is cooler than the air above it, the latter is chilled on entering the ground, and in this state, being unable to hold in suspension so much moisture, parts with some of it to the soil, which also absorbs its ammonia as well as some of its carbonic acid and other gasses. Besides the liberating effect these have on the fertilizers locked up in the soil, they are, some of them, notably ammonia, immediately available as plant-food, while without the presence of air no seed-bed can be in a healthy condition. To roots of all kinds air is essential, for if deprived of oxygen for a short time, they die. In heavy soils winter wheat often looks yellow in spring, because its roots have perished on account of the access of oxygen having been prevented by the excess of water in the soil.

The nature of the tillage to be bestowed on different kinds of soil should vary in accordance with their texture. Recent experiments made by Professor S. W. Johnson, at the Connecticut Agricultural Station, show that while on clayey lands deep tillage is generally best—to conserve the water of a loose-textured soil, its main tillage should be shallow, so that the bulk of the earth remains compact enough to hold the rain and to transmit bottom-water steadily, by capillary attraction, from the subsoil upwards to the roots of the crops. In such soils the surface only should be loosened whenever it forms a crust. For the same reason, summer tillage also, according to his deductions, should not extend to the roots except in clayey soils to compel them to develop lower down and near the water supply, for in unstirred clay soil they can only penetrate a little way and suffer or perish when drought comes. As with fertilizers, so with tillage, the safest guide is experiment. This alone will tell with certainty the depth and frequency of cultivation that will most benefit each sort of crop on all kinds of soil. Careful observation is the foundation alike of scientific theory and intelligent practice, and that farmer will secure the largest measure of success who most accurately notices and records for future reference the relations that exist between his land and its produce under various kinds of treatment.

We have been experimenting in the hopes of originating a very economical yet palatable salad, and the two following are the results, which we submit to our readers:

CABBAGE SALAD

One quart of finely-chopped cabbage; salt and pepper to the taste; the yelks of three hardboiled eggs rubbed smooth with a tablespoonful of melted butter; one-half cup of vinegar—not too strong, and three tablespoonfuls of catsup; chop the whites of the eggs either with the cabbage, or slice and garnish the salad with them.

MOCK CHICKEN SALAD.

To every quart of finely-chopped cabbage, allow one pound of roasted pork tenderloins and the whites of four hard boiled eggs chopped fine; to the yelks rubbed smooth in a tablespoonful of melted butter, add one-half cup of vinegar; salt and pepper to the taste.

FRUIT CAKE—One and one-half pint of milk; one cup of cream; two cups of sugar; one-half cup of butter; one-half pint of molasses; one and one-half cup of hop yeast; and flour to make a thick batter and let rise all night. In the morning and one cup of butter; six cups of sugar; five eggs; one tablespoonful of soda; one-half cup of wine; seven pounds of raisins; spice to taste; stir to a thick batter; put into tins and let rise again; bake as you would bread.

A Few Good Plants For Rooms.

JAMES TAPLIN.

The satisfactory growth of plants in rooms may be taken as a tolerably sure sign that the air is in a healthy condition for the inhabitants to breathe. The great trouble in this country is that rooms are much too hot during winter both for the health of people and plants. Even with furnace heat a room need not be unpleasantly dry if the temperature is not above 65°, and most plants usually grown near the windows will do well in that heat, if grown near the windows, which is usually the coolest part of the room. But a few I will mention, will also do well if grown away from the light. Among these are several species of Palms. I have a Latania Borbonica which has been on a table in the center of the room for over six months, and although the growth is slow the plant is in as good health as when taken from the green-house. I have also a pot of English Ivy suspended in the darkest part of the same room, which is growing and looking well. Another nice, graceful Palm is Seaforthia elegans. This is a much faster growing plant than the Latania and of a more feathery habit, a character it shows when quite small. Chamærops humilis, and Corypha Australis are both excellent for the purpose, and if more choice and expensive species are required, Areca Verschaffeltii, A. lutescens, and A. rubra are among the most beautiful for the purpose and all show their characters when quite small.

None of the above plants requires any special treatment or attention except abundance of water and to have the dust washed from the foliage once or twice each week. I may also mention that none of these plants will stand any frost, so that if an unusually cold night should come, the necessary precautions may be taken to prevent freezing; but if necessary they may be all placed out of doors in a shady spot during summer, and they will be in good condition for another season, if well supplied with water. One advantage with Palms is that the plants may be grown for a long time in small pots by doing which they keep of a moderate size; but if allowed pot-room they soon become too large for general purposes. I may perhaps make an exception in Seaforthia, which, when kept long pot-bound becomes stunted and the foliage is spoiled. Any ordinary good soil, fit for growing Roses, for example, will grow the above plants well, but as they require much water, the drainage must be good.

In my next I will give a few notes on flowering plants for room decoration.

Answers to Correspondents.

G. S. Flooks.—Can you tell me how to keep my stock of hogs up to the grade they hold at present? They are now Berkshires on the sire, and Jersey Reds on the dam.

ANS.—There will be no difficulty in keeping a stock of pigs that are now half-blooded Berkshires, up to as good a standard as it is at present, and probably an improvement may be made by continuing the use of a Berkshire boar; care should be taken, however, to use none but those of undoubted purity, as there is no certainty of any gain in the progeny of a grade sire, however fine an animal he may be himself. There is always a tendency to breed back among all animals, and with pigs this is manifested more frequently on the side of the sire than dam. I have never seen a mean pig from a pure-bred boar, however inferior the sow, but have witnessed many instances of as fine an animal as a pure-bred at the first cross; and at the second, even the fashionable markings were reproduced. For the East and South, there is no better breed than the Berkshire, but perhaps in the great corn-growing West, a dash of Chester White would be better, giving larger size, while the Berkshire blood would prevent that coarseness so objectionable in the Chester.

In many instances under my immediate observation, at the second cross of Berkshire boar on the "Long-nose, Piney-Wood's" sow at the South, the result has been as fine Poland-China pigs, so far as markings were concerned, as one need desire, and as regards form and the general characteristics of a perfect pig, they were much better than many shown at the Northern fairs.

For fattening, grades are fully equal to the pure-breds, usually having larger frames with the same quiet disposition, and nearly the same tendency to fatten; but the breeder who attempts to keep up his stock by breeding grades together, will certainly make a failure. Whatever the dam may be, let the sire be pure-bred, and improvement is almost certain.

CORN-PLANTER.

FRECKLES.—The most effectual means of removing freckles, is the use of those chemicals which dissolve the existing combination. The freckles are situated in the middle or second membrane of the skin, and before any other application it will be advisable to soften the surface by the use of some mild balsam or paste.

Paste for freckles—one ounce of bitter almonds, one ditto of barley flour, mix with sufficient quantity of honey to make the whole into a smooth paste, with which the face more particularly where the freckles are visible, is to be anointed at night and the paste washed off in the morning after a few days the skin will be prepared for a chemical remedy.

To decompose the freckles by laying hold of the iron; the following mixture may be applied. Take one drachm of muriatic acid, half a pint of rain water, half a teaspoonful of lavender; mix well together and apply two or three times a day with a camel's hair brush. The acid seizes upon the iron and the oxygen is disengaged.

MOLASSES COOKIES—One cup of molasses; one cup of sugar; one cup of lard, or butter—if butter is used the cup must be heaped; one cup of luke-warm water in which one large teaspoonful of saleratus is dissolved; one teaspoonful of cloves and one small nutmeg. Cream the sugar and shortening; add the molasses, and spices; then one cup of flour, stirring it well in; then add the water, a little at a time, with flour to make it stiff as you can stir it. Roll one-fourth of an inch in thickness and bake in a quick oven to a light brown. These are nice and moist.

TO PREVENT PIE-CRUST BECOMING SOAKED.—Having myself revived much information from the 'Domestic Economy' department, I should like to tell my Rural sisters of an excellent way to prevent pie-crust from becoming soaked or 'soggy,' which is as follows:—Rub over the under crust well with the beaten white of an egg, before filling the pie. Should the upper crust be brushed with the egg, it will do no harm. If pie-crust is mixed with good, sweet cream, and prepared as above, I can see no reason why it is not perfectly healthy

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	Mail.	Express.
Lve Richmond	†9 00 a m	8 00 p m
" Gordonsville	†12 50 p m	11 20 "
" Charlottesville	† 2 10 "	12 5 a m
" Staunton	† 4 25 "	2 10 "
" Goshen	† 6 16 "	3 48 "
" Millboro'	† 6 41 "	4 08 "
" Covington	† 8 40 "	6 00 "
" White Sulphur	† 9 15 "	7 15 "
" Hinton	12 40 a m	9 25 "
" Kanawha Falls	4 07 "	1 0 p m
" Charleston	6 20 "	2 42 "
Arr Huntington	9 00 "	5 00 "
" Cincinnati (Steamer)	....	6 00 a m
Lve Cincinnati, O. M.	7 15 p m	† 7 30 "
" Cincinnati, I. C. & L.	7 00 "	† 8 00 "
" Cincinnati, C. H. & D.	7 00 "	† 7 30 "
" Cincinnati, L. C. & L	8 10 "	7 10 "
Arr Louisville, O. & M.	12 00 Night.	11 50 "
" Louisville, L. C. & L.	12 35 Night.	11 30 "
" Nashville	7 35 a m	7 33 "
" Memphis	3 35 p m	4 35 p m
" New Orleans	10 30 a m	10 30 a m
" Indianapolis, I. C. & L.	11 20 p m	†12 40 p m
" Indianapolis, .. H. & D.		†12 40 "
" Chicago, I. C. & L.	7 35 a m	† 9 0 "
" Chicago, C. H. & D.	7 50 "	† 8 20 "
" Peoria	8 40 "	6 2 a m
" Burlington	1 50 p m	1 50 p m
" Keokuk	2 10 "	2 10 "
" Vincennes	2 45 a m	† 2 3 "
" St. Louis	8 25 "	† 8 45 "
" Sedalia	6 10 p m	5 45 a m
" Kansas City	10 20 "	10 20 "
" Leavenworth	12 28 a m	12 37 p m
" Atchison	1 37 "	1 45 "
" St. Joseph	2 4 "	2 42 "
" Omaha	2 15 "	9 35 "
" Cheyenne	....	1 20 "
" Ogden	....	6 15 "
" Salt Lake	....	8 20 "
" Sacramento	....	10 25 a m
" San Francisco	....	5 35 p m

TEXAS CONNECTIONS.	Iron Mt.	M. K. & T.
Lve St. Louis	10 00 am	8 47 a m
Arr Little Rock	3 00 "	
" Denison		5 00 p m
" Sherman	5 55 p m	5 30 "
" Dallas	11 25 "	9 15 "
" Waco		5 30 a m
" Hearne	a	2 25 "
" Rockdale	4 15 "	
" Austin	10 0 "	10 00 "
" Houston	7 30 "	10 45 "
" Galveston	10 10 "	1 35 p m
" San Antonio	8 00 p m	8 10 "

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NORTH.

STATIONS Leave	P. M.	A. M.	
" Staunton			
" Harrisonburg	5 25 6,26	7.00	11,4 P5
" Broadway	6,59	8,10	12,2
" New Market	7,35	8,41	12,42
" Mt. Jackson	8,57	9 18	1,13
" Woodstock	9,30	10 20	1,49
" Strasburg	11,06	11,29	2,22
Ar. Winchester	1,14		3,27
" Harp. Ferry	7,50		4,55
" Washington	9,00		7,20
" Baltimore			8,30

SOUTH.

STATIONS Leave	A. M.	P. M.
" Baltimore	6,40	
" Washington	7,55	
" Harp. Ferry	9,40	
" Winchester	11,04	
" Strasburg	12,05	
" Woodstock	12,37	3,15
Ar. Mt. Jackson	1,13	4,28
" New Market	1,34	5,12
" Broadway	1,52	5,51
" Harrisonburg	2,25	7,00
" Staunton	3,30	

Close connection for Front Royal, arrive at Front Royal 2,12, P. M. Leave Front Royal 12,36 P. M. arrive at Woodstock, 3,15 P. M.

ON and after July 1st 1877 Sunday passenger train will leave

	A. M., P. M.	
Harper's Ferry at		10,1
Strasburg		12,3
Woodstock	"	1,0
Edinburg	"	1,2
Mt. Jackson	"	1,45
Broadway	"	2,2
Harrisonburg arrive at	"	2,5

and a stock train with passenger car attached will leave

	P. M.	
Harrisonburg on Sunday at		3 30
Mt. Jackson	"	5 06
Edinburg	"	5 31
Woodstock	"	5 52
Arrive at Harper's Ferry	"	9 40